

# NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Gernon Road,  
Letchworth  
on Thursday, 25th January, 2024 at 7.30 pm

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Raj Bhakar, Adam Compton, Faye Frost, Ian Moody, Michael Muir, Lisa Nash and Michael Weeks.

### 2 MINUTES - 23 NOVEMBER 2023

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 23 November 2023 as amended be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

### 3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

### 4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded.
- (2) Members were reminded that this Council had declared a Climate Emergency. This was a serious decision and meant that, as this was an emergency, all of us, officers and Members had that in mind as we carried out our various roles and tasks for the benefit of our District.
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.
- (4) The Chair advised that the normal procedure rules in respect of debate and times to speak will apply.
- (5) The Chair advised that 4.8.23(a) of the Constitution did not apply to this meeting. A comfort break would be held at an appropriate time, should proceedings continue at length.
- (6) The Chair reminded the Committee about the upcoming Chair's Civic Event and Awards, being held on Friday 1 March 2024.
- (7) The Chair held a minute's silence to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

### 5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no public participants.

## 6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were two questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.11.

### **(A) Home Internet for Officers**

Councillor Ralph Muncer to Councillor Ian Albert (Executive Member for Finance and IT).

### **(B) Impact of Waste Service Design on Rural Communities**

Councillor Ralph Muncer to Councillor Amy Allen (Executive Member for Recycling and Waste Management).

## 7 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

There were three motions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 4.8.12.

### **A) Anti Luton-Airport Expansion**

**RESOLVED:** The Council resolved that the Leader and the Deputy Leader write jointly to the Leader, Deputy Leader, Luton Borough Council's Chief Executive, the Managing Director of Luton Rising (the trading name of LLAOL), the Leaders/Deputy Leaders of all surrounding local government authorities, all relevant (local) members of parliament, the Secretary of State and the Shadow Secretary of State for Transport clearly stating that we as a Council are opposed to any further expansion of Luton Airport.

### **B) White Ribbon**

**RESOLVED:** The Council resolved to:

- (1) Encourage all male councillors to take the White Ribbon pledge to never to take part in, condone or stay silent about violence against women.
- (2) Work towards White Ribbon accreditation, joining the large number of public sector bodies that have already done so.
- (3) Mark White Ribbon Day on 25 November each year (aim for 2024, if not 2025) and encourage participation among councillors, council staff and local organisations.
- (4) Continue to work with organisations and support campaigns for the end of violence against women and the promotion of healthy relationships.
- (5) Ask the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education to request further work be done in support of all elements of this motion.
- (6) Call out all forms of sexual objectification and all its negative outcomes and encourage others to do the same. Championing the wellbeing of everyone, particularly of women and girls, and encouraging the education of everyone, particularly of men and boys.

### **C) Health Intervention**

**RESOLVED:** The Council would incorporate the following into service planning and funding streams and:

- (1) Look to include the consideration of health and well-being implications in the decision-making process across all portfolios and service directorates, with increased support resources for officers (such as toolkits, assessment logic flows etc.);

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- (2) Ask Officers to ensure that, as the Council's policies are routinely reviewed, specific consideration is given to how policies and our related decisions and actions, affect our contribution to health interventions and outcomes, and where necessary, update these policies to have better impacts wherever possible. As part of this, Overview & Scrutiny should be given the opportunity to review policy changes and regularly review progress on health interventions;
- (3) Ask Officers to continue to liaise with Hertfordshire County Council colleagues and continue to work with the Herts and West Essex and Cambridge and Peterborough Integrated Care Boards in their work on this, to take account of the findings in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and to encourage the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny and each Area Forum Chair to invite presentation of information on population health, health initiatives, and service provision for consideration by their respective committees and the wider public, at least once annually.
- (4) Ask officers to investigate the most appropriate training for Members and officers about how to promote health interventions, outcomes, and policies for consideration by Council;
- (5) Request that the Leader and Deputy Leader write to the Secretary of State for Health requesting that they provide the necessary powers and resources to make local action on health interventions and outcomes easier and to support the implementation of the recommendations of the joint LGA and NHS Confederation report on Integrated Care Partnerships (Integrated Care Partnerships: Driving the future vision for health and care | Local Government Association).
- (6) Request that the Leader and Deputy Leader write to the Chief Executive of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough ICB requesting that they initiate a process of constitutional variation (as provided for under section 1.6 of the ICB constitution), with a view to inviting a third Local Authority partner member to join the ICB, and to consider allowing for that member to be drawn from either Hertfordshire County Council or North Hertfordshire District Council.
- (7) Continue to work with partners across the District, County and wider region to deliver widespread positive health interventions and outcomes.

## **8 ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

The Chair advised that the items referred from Cabinet would be taken with the respective items on the agenda.

## **9 REVIEW OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2024/25**

**RESOLVED** That Council:

- (1) Considered the report and recommendations of the IRP, as attached as Appendix A of the submitted report.
- (2) Agreed the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/2025 as set out in Appendix B of the submitted report.
- (3) Expressed appreciation to the IRP for their work over the last year on this report.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** To ensure that the Council meets its statutory requirements of an annual review and adoption of the scheme.

10 **COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024/2025**

**RESOLVED** That Council:

- (1) Approved the new banded scheme for working age applicants which remained unchanged for 2024/2025.
- (2) Noted that the new scheme has had a greater financial impact than expected, and any resultant Collection Fund shortfall would be split between the Council and its Major Precepting Authorities. The Councils share would be around 12%.
- (3) Noted that the Discretionary Exceptional Hardship Scheme, previously agreed to provide additional transitional support, had been underspent, largely due to the positive impacts of the main scheme. (The surplus of this would be used to off-set the impact on the District Council in relation to the main scheme).
- (4) Noted a further review was being undertaken during 2024/2025, to ascertain any further changes to be considered for the scheme in 2025/2026.

**REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

To ensure that the Council had a Council Tax Reduction Scheme that continued to:

- (1) Provide the greatest support to the lowest income households.
- (2) Reduce the administrative burden that has been placed on the Council since the introduction of Universal Credit (UC).
- (3) Be simple to understand, meaning that customers will be able to calculate entitlement and assess the impact of potential changes in circumstances.

11 **Q2 INVESTMENT STRATEGY (INTEGRATED CAPITAL AND TREASURY) MONITORING**

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That Council noted the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of September 2023 including the new Capital items.
- (2) That Council confirmed the addition of the Local Authority Housing Fund Phase 2 to the capital programme for 2023/24 and approved the reprofiling of Bancroft & Priory Splash Pads from 2024/25 into 2023/24. Both as detailed in table 3.

**REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

- (1) Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded.
- (2) To ensure the Council's continued compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003 and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk.

**RESOLVED:** That Full Council

- (1) Approved the proposed amendments to the Planning Control Committee's Terms of Reference as per 8.1 of this report, with the deletion of the word "Ward", in lines 2 and 11 of the proposed changes to section 8.4.5(c)(iii) of the Planning Control Committee's Terms of Reference.
- (2) Approved the removal of Appendices 1-2 to Section 8 of the Constitution.
- (3) Agreed the proposed Procedure for Speaking at the Planning Control Committee (Appendix A), with the replacement of the words "Ward Member with Member" in paragraphs 1.5, and with the deletion of paragraph 1.9.
- (4) Agreed to the principle, that if the Procedure at 2.2 required further amendment, that the Monitoring Officer may do so in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Control Committee, and the Group Leaders, including changes to 6.1 and 6.2 to make them conform with the procedure as amended in 8.4.5 (c)(iii).
- (4) A) Whilst this is not a formal resolution, the following should be taken into account by the Monitoring Officer, in finalising the Procedure, in respect of section 1.5 to 1.8 be amended as follows:

- (i) Section 1.5, bullet points 1 and 3:

"Objectors" Group – a maximum of 3 persons against approval of the application, the speaking time will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, and the right to address the Committee is confined to persons who have previously made written representations on the application (either as an individual or as part of a consulted group during the consultation).

"Supporters" Group – a maximum of 3 persons in favour of approval of the application and the right to address the Committee is confined to persons who have previously made written representations on the application (either as an individual or as part of a consulted groups during the consultation).

- (ii) Section 1.6

In the case of "Objectors" and "Supporters", no more than three people may speak on an application.

- (iii) Section 1.7

In the case of "Objectors" and "Supporters" the time allocated to each speaker is 3 minutes, however, should there be only one objector or support the time allocated to each speaker is 5 minutes. This time limit is strictly adhered to.

- (iv) Section 1.8

In the case of a Major application or being of significant public interest, the Chair may agree to extend the speaking time allocated to each "group". Any request to extend the speaking time should be made to the Chair in writing by 5pm, three clear working days prior to the meeting date. The Committee, Member & Scrutiny Team will be advised/ and then advise all registered speakers of the extension. Any agreed extension of time shall be offered to all registered speakers.

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- (5) Approved the amendments detailed in 8.6 regarding delegations to attest the affixing of the Council's Common Seal.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** Recommendations 2.1-2.3 are to deal with a number of situations that have arisen over the last year (or so). Recommendation 2.3-2.4 allows for greater flexibility to update a Council Procedure, rather than making this a Constitutional matter, when amendments are required. Recommendation 2.5 is for practical resource reasons for attesting/ sealing documents.